



## Norman Court Montessori CIC Complaints Policy

### **Statutory Guidance**

Keeping Children Safe in Education:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/550511/Keeping\\_children\\_safe\\_in\\_education.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550511/Keeping_children_safe_in_education.pdf)

Statutory Framework for EYFS (2017):

[http://www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2017/03/EYFS\\_STATUTORY\\_FRAMEWORK\\_2017.pdf](http://www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2017/03/EYFS_STATUTORY_FRAMEWORK_2017.pdf)

The Data Protection Act (1998):

<https://www.gov.uk/data-protection/the-data-protection-act>

At Norman Court Montessori CIC, we believe that children, parents and guardians are entitled to expect courteous, prompt and careful attention to their needs and wishes. Norman Court welcomes suggestions for improvement and will give prompt and serious attention to any concerns.

Any person, including members of the general public, may make a complaint about any provision of facilities or services that Norman Court provides, unless separate statutory procedures apply (such as exclusions or admissions).

### **Procedure - Making a complaint**

#### **Stage 1 – Informal Resolution**

- Anyone who has a concern about an aspect of Norman Court provision is encouraged to talk over his/her concerns with the Head as soon as is reasonably practicable once a concern arises.
- Stage 1, informal complaints will be resolved amicably within **five working days** of raising the issue. This timescale is amended to 28 days during school holiday periods.

#### **Stage 2 – Formal Resolution**

- If a Stage 1 complaint does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the complainant moves to Stage 2 of the procedure by putting the concerns or complaint in writing. Stage 2 is not automatically triggered whenever a concern is expressed in writing, for example by email. Complaints will progress to Stage 2 after first being considered at the preliminary stage and only then if the complainant intends to escalate the matter to the formal stages.
- For complainants who are not comfortable with making written complaints, there is a template form for recording complaints (See Appendix 1). This form may be completed by the Head and signed by the complainant.
- Norman Court Montessori CIC stores all information relating to written complaints in the setting Complaint file.

- When the investigation into the complaint is completed, the Head will meet with the complainant to discuss the outcome *within* 5 working days of starting the investigation.
- We will inform the complainant in writing of the outcome of the investigation **within 28 days** of him/her making the complaint.
- When the complaint is resolved at this stage, we will record the complaint, actions and outcomes on a Norman Court Complaint Record Form (See Appendix 2). This record is kept in the setting Complaints file.

### **Stage 3 – Panel Hearing**

- If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage 2, he or she can request to move to Stage 3. For compliance purposes a panel hearing will take place, unless the complainant later indicates that they are now satisfied and do not wish to proceed further. The panel hearing should, therefore, proceed notwithstanding that the complainant may subsequently decide not to attend. If necessary the panel should consider the complainant’s complaint in his/her absence and issue findings on the substance of the complaint, thereby bringing the matter to a conclusion. The requirement for the panel to proceed does not prevent the school from accommodating the complainants availability for dates or considering comments concerning panel composition.
- The panel is appointed by or on behalf of the board and consists of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint; one of whom is independent of the management and running of the school. The complainant may be accompanied at a panel hearing if they wish.
- An agreed written record of the discussion will be made, as well as any decision or action to take as a result; with the result made available in writing to the complainant, and where relevant the person complained about, within 28 working days of the panel meeting.

This record signifies that the procedure has concluded. The summative points, actions and outcomes will be logged in our Complaint Record Form and kept in our Complaints File. The panel’s decision is final.

### **Complaints about the Head**

Where a complaint concerns the Head, the complainant should first directly approach the Head in an attempt to resolve the issue informally. If the complainant is not satisfied with this outcome, or if they have good reason to feel it is inappropriate to approach the Head in the first instance, they should notify the setting’s governing body. The Stage 2 process will then commence, but with the Chair of Governors or another nominated governor as the individual responsible for the investigation rather than the Head.

Contact email address for governing body: [trustees@norman-court.org](mailto:trustees@norman-court.org)

### **Early Years Foundation Stage**

Additional requirements apply for the EYFS setting beyond those which apply to the rest of the school. We will investigate written complaints relating to fulfilment of the EYFS requirements and notify complainants of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of receiving a complaint.

A person making a complaint may refer the matter to Ofsted if they are dissatisfied with the way in which the complaint was handled by a setting, or the complaint is serious or suggests a breach of the EYFS welfare requirements and/or learning and development requirements. A parent, or other individual, making a complaint to Ofsted about a provider may and can do anonymously if they wish.

Contact telephone number for OFSTED: 0300 123 1231

Contact email address for OFSTED: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

## **Records**

We recognise that all educational settings are required to keep a written record of any complaints that reach Stage 2 and/or Stage 3. The nature of all complaints, details, actions and outcomes are recorded on the Complaint Record Form, in our Complaints File.

All correspondence, statements and written records are to be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the 2008 Act requests them. This information will, therefore, be available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and Head Teacher. Records will be shared with the Department of Education as the Registration Authority, the Local Safeguarding Children's Board or Ofsted when they inspect or upon request at any other time. Complainants also have a right to copies of these records under the Freedom of Information and Data Protection Acts.